



# IDAHO BARLEY NEWSBRIEF

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State funding for roads &  
Ag Research & Extension  
IBC sets research budget  
Barley Agronomist Corner  
Forage Barleys

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## Idaho barley check-off dollars at work... IBC sets preliminary FY 2016 research funding - IBC con-

ducted its annual research review on Feb. 18 and set preliminary funding allocations during a conference call held March 4. 2016 research funding was set at \$117,840, down 4 percent from the current year. Chairman Tim Dillin noted that the board was proceeding cautiously with 2016 funding because the IBC expects to see a significant draw-down in reserves resulting from 2014 crop losses. New research projects will focus on evaluating soil test methods for determining nitrogen fertilizer recommendations and barley response to inorganic phosphorus fertilizers.

## 2015 Idaho Legislative Round-Up: Funding for UI Ag Research & Extension & Road Maintenance

On March 4 the Idaho Legislature's joint budget committee known as JFAC unanimously approved an FY 2016 appropriations of \$28.7 million, for the University of Idaho's Agricultural Research and Extension Service. This represents a \$2.3 million or 8.6% increase in state support compared to the current year. If approved by the full Legislature, this enhancement will restore CALS Ag Research & Extension state funding to the level it was prior to the 2009 recession and subsequent \$6 million in funding cuts during FY 2010-2012.

This FY 2016 appropriation provides \$1.53 million in personnel funding enhancements, which include full funding for 16 technical support research positions and fully restores funding for 7 to 10 graduate research assistantship stipends. These enhancements will directly benefit cereal research in Idaho.

## Idaho Legislators Building Consensus for State Road & Bridge Funding - guest article by Travis Jones, Executive Director, Idaho Grain Producers Association

Does \$262 million sound like a lot of money? What about \$587 million? These two figures represent the estimated funds needed to tackle Idaho's road and bridge repair backlog and to fully fund a deepening list of infrastructure improvements, respectively.

After years of attempts to find adequate funding for the maintenance backlog of Idaho's roads and bridges, there is no longer a disagreement over the need. However within the state legislature there remains a questionable will to raise the funds necessary to repair the state's deficient infrastructure.

**Senator Bert Brackett (right), R-Rogerson, chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee**, is a key voice in the negotiations on the issue.

*"We have spent the past couple years building awareness of the need for increased road maintenance funding, but we have found it very challenging to translate need into votes,"* said Brackett.



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# Barley Agronomist Corner

**Christopher W. Rogers, Ph.D.**

**University of Idaho Barley Research Agronomist , Aberdeen Research & Center**

Weather conditions have been exceptionally mild these first few months of 2015, and temperatures are routinely approaching record highs across the state. With spring approaching rapidly, we are in full swing preparing to plant our spring barley research trials. Through the support of your check off dollars, we have the opportunity to initiate new research projects focused on fertilizer management for spring malt barley and add to currently ongoing projects focused on a survey of wireworms and management options led by Dr. Arash Rashed. The barley agronomy program will also be contributing to Dr. Amber Moore's long-term manure management study in Kimberly, ID. Our fertilizer management projects will investigate the applicability of new nitrogen soil testing methodologies across southern and northern Idaho, and our phosphorus study will investigate the influence of fertilizer phosphorus applications on several malt-barley varieties. We are conducting many of these trials on University of Idaho Agricultural Experiment stations but have also had incredible support from growers who have allowed us to sample their fields this spring. In particular, we are currently cooperating with nearly forty growers between our nitrogen and wireworm studies. Your cooperation is critical for the success of these studies and we appreciate all of you who are participating. In addition to our research efforts, we are currently working to publish two new University of Idaho Extension publications focused on agronomic practices for barley and a visual guide to assist with identification of wireworm species. Finally, we look forward to hearing from you, as the feedback and contributions from all growers, county extension personnel, consultants, and barley industry stakeholders are crucial for creating a productive research and extension program to address the current needs of Idaho growers.



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## Road maintenance funding continued from page 1

However not all legislators are as easily convinced that increasing road and bridge funding is critical right now. The November 2014 state election brought many new faces to the Idaho House and Senate chambers. Some of the new legislators were elected on the principles that include reducing taxes, cutting government spending and supporting increased local control. Raising automobile registration fees and state gas tax monies may not be acceptable options for a portion of the elected body.

Sen. Brackett is reminding skeptical legislators and stakeholders that it is everyone's responsibility to protect Idaho's highway system. *"We have inherited a good transportation infrastructure and it behooves us to maintain it. There really isn't a better time than now with low gas prices and economic growth which puts more demands on our roads and bridges but also generates revenue for necessary investments like this."*

Several legislative proposals have surfaced, each taking various creative angles to generate dollars. House Bill 95, sponsored by Senator Jim Rice, R-Caldwell, would loosen up to \$20 million by removing the state sales/use tax on road materials used for road and bridge construction and maintenance.

### QUICK FACTS

**The latest bill approved for printing by the House Ways & Means Committee would raise about \$120 million annually through a combination of measures:**

- ◆ 5-cent increase in gas and diesel taxes, bringing the per-gallon tax to 30 cents (20% hike).
- ◆ 2-cent transfer tax increase on all fuels, to 3 cents a gallon.
- ◆ 25% across-the-board increase in vehicle registration fees.
- ◆ Additional fees for large trucks and electric and hybrid vehicles.
- ◆ Transfer \$10 million from the state general fund to repay federally funded road maintenance work, freeing up more money for new maintenance.
- ◆ A portion of any budget surplus would get earmarked exclusively for roads.

Rep. Joe Palmer, R-Meridian, chairman of the House Transportation and Defense Committee, proposed House Bill 111 allowing local highway districts to seek authority from voters to temporarily increase vehicle registration fees within the district to pay for road improvements.

**So what does all of this mean for Idaho farmers?** The response also varies. IGPA policy supports increasing truck registration fees and fuel taxes in a fair and equitable manner to pay for highway infrastructure needs. IGPA grower-leaders and its lobby team are heavily engaged with key lawmakers like Brackett and Palmer to ensure that the voice of grain growers is represented as legislation solidifies.

*"No segment of our state's economy is more dependent on a good transportation system than agriculture - to receive our inputs and ship our*

*products to domestic and international markets - so agriculture needs to speak up,"* said Chairman Brackett.

The IGPA is also working closely with former **IGPA president and barley commissioner Representative Clark Kauffman (right), R-Filer**, and Governor Butch Otter, both critical players in the transportation debate.



Kauffman, a farmer and past president of the Idaho Association of Highway Districts, offered his thoughts: *"Transportation funding continues to be a hot topic. Not really any new ideas, just different combinations of old ideas. We will keep pushing for a balanced approach. Keep encouraging your legislators to increase funding for our infrastructure."*



## Forage Barleys

Hay or hooded barley is becoming popular as a forage crop because it is very palatable to cattle, lower cost and less water than alfalfa and is an annual crop, which allows more flexibility in the cropping system. The highest protein is in boot stage. Maximum yield is at soft dough. Available varieties include:

- ◆ **Lavina** - variety from Montana State University.
- ◆ **Stockford** - a WestBred variety that is now owned by McKay Seed. 2-row hooded barley, medium plant height and good straw strength, very high relative feed value.

### Forage Barley Seed Suppliers South Idaho

Centennial Grain, Rexburg, 208-356-5531

AgriSource, Burley, 208-678-2286

Western Seed, Heyburn, 208-678-2268

### North Idaho

McKay Seed, Rosalia, WA, 509-523-3471.